



City of Seattle

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May 19, 2006

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

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The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City on matters related to pedestrians and the impacts which actions by the City may have upon the pedestrian environment; and shall have the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the City's planning processes insofar as they may relate to pedestrian safety and access.

City Council Resolution
28791

Hadley Greene
Washington State Ferries
2901 Third Avenue, Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98121

Dear Hadley Greene:

The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board (SPAB) thanks Washington State Ferries (WSF) for the opportunity to provide input on the scoping of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Seattle Ferry Terminal (Colman Dock) redevelopment. SPAB commends WSF for the recognition of the need to improve accommodations for foot passengers, including pedestrians with special needs, that is evident in the Purpose and Need Statement (Preliminary Draft for Review). Foot passengers at Colman Dock currently outnumber vehicles by approximately one to three during morning and evening commute hours, and this trend is expected to accelerate. Providing facilities for foot passengers will increasingly drive infrastructure needs: by approximately 2015 the capacity of the Bainbridge Island vessels will need to be expanded to accommodate foot passenger demand, between 2015 and 2016 the number of foot passengers on the Edmonds/Kingston passenger-vehicle route is expected to necessitate an increase in vessel capacity or a direct Kingston/Seattle passenger-only ferry, and by 2030 17,000 daily foot passengers are projected to use the Seattle Ferry Terminal. Meeting the needs of these ferry customers will require excellent pedestrian facilities and multimodal connections from the ferry terminal into Downtown Seattle. Recognition of these needs is reflected in the Purpose and Need Statement.

We have one primary concern regarding the current scoping and Purpose and Need Statement for the EIS. We urge WSF to thoroughly evaluate, minimize, and mitigate the impacts of the redevelopment and growing ferry demand on all pedestrians, not just foot passengers. The increase in vehicular ferry traffic, from both vehicles queuing to depart and vehicles arriving in Seattle, will significantly change the traffic dynamics near the ferry terminal. In the efforts to quickly move vehicles into and out of the ferry terminal, as well as minimize LOS F conditions at intersections near Colman Dock, the safety and convenience of pedestrians must not be compromised. While a redeveloped Marion Street pedestrian bridge, with capacity for two-way foot traffic, might be able to meet some foot passenger needs in the immediate vicinity of the terminal, it would do nothing to meet the needs of pedestrians who are traveling on Alaskan Way. The evaluation and mitigation of pedestrian impacts must go beyond the needs of foot passengers. Ensuring adequate sidewalks, crossing facilities, and convenient signal timing will provide benefits to all pedestrians. Maintaining and improving the safety and convenience of travel by foot will help ensure high volumes of pedestrian traffic on the waterfront, providing customers for the "non fare-box revenue sources" planned as part of the Colman Dock redevelopment.

WSF has a responsibility to evaluate and address the impacts to non-ferry foot traffic of the Seattle Ferry Terminal redevelopment. In turn, improvements to pedestrian facilities beyond the primary pedestrian ingress and egress to the terminal will provide benefits to WSF's customers and potentially increase non fare-box revenue. Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Celeste Gilman
Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board



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